

***House Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Healthy Families and
Communities
Hearing on “LIHEAP: Overview and Current Issues”***

***Opening Statement of Ranking Member Todd Russell Platts
November 13, 2007***

Good afternoon. Welcome to this hearing on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). I appreciate and share the Chairwoman’s interest in this important issue. With the winter months approaching, this hearing is especially timely.

Hundreds of thousands of low-income Pennsylvanians are able to take advantage of LIHEAP assistance during the winter months. I hear regularly from constituents regarding the important role which this program plays in their lives. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Swanson regarding his personal experience working with the LIHEAP program in Pennsylvania.

The rising cost of energy has become increasingly burdensome to individuals and businesses alike. While I believe that it is vitally important that we reign in energy costs and decrease our consumption of foreign energy, we must not forget those citizens who must choose between heating or cooling their homes during times of severe temperatures or buying groceries for their families.

The LIHEAP program is up for reauthorization this year. I stand ready to work with Chairwoman McCarthy to improve this important program. The testimonies of the distinguished panel before us today will greatly enhance our understanding of the issues surrounding the program and help us to focus our efforts where they are most needed.

Thank you to all of the panelists for joining us today. With that, I yield back to the Chairwoman.